The Seed Sower.

A Magazine for the Church, the School, and the Home

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CONTENTS.

		PAGE.
1.	"Peace." Poem	49
2.	De Profundis. Poem	49
3.	The Substance of Faith. Sermon	49
4.	Lost Leader	52
5.	The New Theology. II.	54
6.	The Song of Labour. Poem	57
7.	Sir Oliver Lodge's Catechism	58
8.	A Free Catholic Church	60
9.	Notes and Jottings	62
10.	News from the Field	63

"Peace."

My Soul, there is a countrie
Afar beyond the stars,
Where stands a winged Sentrie
All skilful in the wars.
There, above noise and danger,
Sweet peace sits crowned with smiles,
And One born in a manger
Commands the beauteous files.
He is thy gracious friend
And (O my Soul, awake!)
Did in pure love descend,
To die here for thy sake.
If thou canst get but thither,
There growes the flowre of peace,
The rose that cannot wither—
Thy fortresse and thy ease.
Leave, then, thy foolish ranges;
For none can thee secure,
But One who never changes—
Thy God, thy Life, thy Cure.

HENRY VAUGHAN.

De Profundis.

My soul were dark
But for the golden light and rainbow hue
That, sweeping heaven with their triumphal arc,
Break on the view,

Enough to feel
That God indeed is good! Enough to know
Without the gloomy clouds he could reveal
No beauteous bow.

WILLIAM CROSWELL.

THE peace of God will hold you in safe keeping,—and what a peace that must be! No plummet line can fathom it, no tempest can assail it, no time can destroy it.—*J. R. Macduff.*

The Substance of Faith.

SERMON BY THE REV. FRANK K. FREESTON.

"Now faith is the substance of things hoped for."—*Hebrews xi.* 1.

How simple and direct is this plain, straight statement. It suggests at first sight no matter for argument, and no spirit of dispute: it is obvious and non-contentious: it assumes universal acceptance. Yet beneath its peaceful surface lie two sunken, dangerous rocks round which the waters whirl and eddy in ceaseless, restless fury. In the whole history of theology no word has more fiercely been made a battle cry than that of "faith"; in the specific doctrine of the Trinity all the controversy and the difficulty have ranged round the significance of the word "substance," and the Latin and the Greek Church have even yet not settled their difference. But the Athanasian Creed declares that *the Catholic Faith* is this, that we worship one God in Trinity, and Trinity in Unity: neither confounding the Persons nor dividing the Substance. Further, that the *right faith* is that Jesus Christ is God and Man; God, of the substance of the Father, and Man, of the substance of his Mother; one, in sum, not by confusion of substances, but by unity of person, and so on.

But let us turn away, without need of excuse, from these daring speculations of the past, these dialectic subtleties which simply bristle with difficulties: let us take these words "faith" and "substance" in their general, their intelligible, and their Apostolical meanings.

Faith is the product of belief and life. We may believe with the intellect, accept this and that statement, yet be none the better for it: we may live from our conscience and heart, and yet not love God with our mind and thought. Faith comes from both. It is the joint conviction of reason and emotion, the perfect union of mind and heart into one complete verdict. It is the rich fusion into one experience of devotion and knowledge, the full reconciliation of the life of the Spirit and the life of the intellect. Anything less than that is but a half faith; it is either unspiritual or irrational.

And this faith then is the "substance" of religion. It is not one part of it, or a theory about it, or an opinion upon it, but religion itself. Burke, in his speech on the French Revolution, denounces those who hate sects different from their own more than they love the *substance* of religion. The substance is that on which faith really lives, that in which it consists, and on which it exists: it is the essence which remains when the non-essential things change: it is the permanent which persists when the transient things pass. As Emerson says in his "Wordnotes"—

"*All the forms are fugitive,*
But the substances survive."

It is the firm and solid ground, hence, of our assurance, our confidence—our assurance of the things for which we are hoping, our evidence of things not seen.

Now we can understand all this without difficulty, even though the divergent faiths of theology leave us in much perplexity, and we may not see our way to the right faith as to the Trinity.

This substance of faith lies at the very centre of life. And unless it be there at the inner core of a man's consciousness, he can spring no circle or arch of existence, measure no radius of religious experience, draw no diameter of the things he is hoping for. And there is some danger, less or more, as the old theology is moving afar from its former centre, that man may take to roaming at large around the circumferences of religion without always drawing central inspiration. The old theology was deep, but narrow; the new theology, if broad, must not be shallow. It would sometimes seem to the onlooker as though breadth and depth could never go together; as though the gain of one must be at the sacrifice of the other. That, of course, is not the case; but unless there be the central substance of faith within us, our very breadth may become specious.

One continually meets good persons everywhere whose mental circumferences are too far from their centre, whose breadth is that of a river flat where the stream meanders through many shallows instead of directing its waters along one deep and onward course.

There is the humanitarian who is too broad to have a personal friend. Life should, indeed, be a brotherhood with no room for hatred, but that does not mean that we either can, or should, love every person with equal regard. I knew a man who was full of sympathy for all humanity generally, and who worked with zest for many reforms, but he neither had, nor needed, a single personal friend. He was interested in principles but not in persons, and would have regarded a friendship as a form of selfishness. But should not sympathy, like charity, begin at home, then widen out to the few persons who are close friends, and to whom your love flows forth easily, and thence again to the many with the knowledge it has gained thereby. Thus will it grow deeper and double its power, because its strength comes from its very centre.

There is the cosmopolitan who is too broad to be a patriot. We are sometimes asked to believe that, in proportion as we love our own country we have less to give to others. But love is not like that, nay, the very reverse. There is a spurious and self-conscious patriotism which thinks it honours its own land by disparaging every other, but this tree is known to be corrupt by its evil fruit. This is the real nature of love—that the more we give, the more we have. Love thou thy land, its struggles for liberty, its heroes and martyrs, its prophets and saints, its sacred shrines, its toil, and its people. Then you will be the better able to understand the patriotism of another nation as well; then cosmopolitanism, and internationalism, and the county of nations, will rest on a deep and central basis: but not otherwise.

There is the Christian who is too broad to feel much interest in Christ. He sets forth very systematically the ethics of Christianity, he shows wherein Christian morality was an advance on that of the Pharisee, he quotes the precepts of the Sermon on the Mount as though each were an impersonal statement, but he misses the vital discovery that Christianity is an enshrined personality, that its source, its message, its influence, its force, all flow from the personal Jesus. Until he realises this he is not at the centre, but at the circumference; he has the form, but not the substance; he has breadth, but not depth, of Christian experience.

There is the Churchman who is too broad to take much interest in his own church. He says, and we agree with him, that the differences between the churches have been exaggerated beyond reason: he thinks that it is quite time to be done with the *odium theologicum*, and that sectarianism in any form is a hateful and unlovely thing; he holds that all the separate sects are branches of the Universal Church, and argues that he can attend any service, and so attends few, or none, perhaps, and grows lax in all church allegiance. This passes for breadth, and faith, and intellectual independence: it is really spiritual shallowness. Whoever feels a vital interest in the Universal Church will rejoice to make his special church an integral part and parcel of this great ideal. He will say both in word and deed, "O living Church, thine errand speed" through the church which I attend.

These instances, you will agree, are not at all imaginary, but to be met with frequently. Much of our religious ineffectiveness arises from shallow natures, and loose thinkers, meddling with deep truths, and solemn themes. How often we are made to protest, "Save me from my friends," or, "Oh, if they would only let it alone," when the speaker is only hovering round about a great idea instead of penetrating to its centre. Faith is the substance of things hoped for.

All the more welcome then is any earnest attempt of a devout and thinking man to deal with the fundamentals of religion. There has just been written in revised form a Catechism for parents and teachers, bearing the title, "The Substance of Faith." The author, Sir Oliver Lodge, explains his object thus:—"I have attempted the task of formulating the fundamentals, or substance, of religious faith in terms of Divine Immanence in such a way as to assimilate sufficiently all the results of existing knowledge, and still to be in harmony with the teachings of the poets and inspired writers of all ages. The statement is intended to deny nothing which can reasonably be held by any specific denomination, and it seeks to affirm nothing but what is consistent with universal Christian experience."

This Catechism is extremely interesting, to say the least. Its language is rather complex, its ideas are somewhat abstruse, it lacks emotion and the poetic sense, and it has little chance of gaining general acceptance. To this extent it is not a success. But it must be judged as an attempt, and in this respect it is significant. For in what does it place the substance of faith? Not in any theory or theology which will do duty for to-day, but be found in error to-morrow: not in any outward claim of authority which must give way before historic or scientific scrutiny; but in manhood, goodness, duty, service, God, prayer, the communion of saints and the Eternal life. The substance of faith exists for all in the character and the will, in the knowledge of good and evil, in the life of God in the soul, in the aspiration of the human heart and the inspiration of the Holy Spirit; in other words in those religious essentials which are independent of time and change. And hence the kingdom of heaven is not only at hand, it is potentially in our midst, and may be actually within us. The ideal is to be made real in each and in all: nothing is too good to be true: each soul is to attain its highest aim: the world is to be transfigured and transformed. The Life Eternal in its fullest sense must be ours: it rests largely with ourselves. The Holy Spirit is ever ready to help us along the way towards Truth and Goodness: it is our privilege, through faithful service, to join the Communion of Saints, and enter God's peace. Here is the substance of Faith, the breadth and depth of the things in which we hope—their soul and centre for ever.

PRAYER.

Lord of all being, from whom we come, to whom we return, we would trust ourselves in confidence to Thy keeping. O Thou Centre of all life, and Source of all thought, we would enfold our lives with Thee, and fix our thoughts on Eternity. O Thou, in Whom we live by faith, give us the assurance of the things for which we hope, the evidence of things we cannot see. Teach us that, if we love not our brother whom we have seen, we cannot love Thee, our Father in Heaven. Make our love more full and deep. Strengthen us with the might of Thy Spirit. Grant us the length and breadth, the height and depth of the true and blessed life, and fill us at the last with all the fulness of Thy peace. *Amen.*

Lost Leader.

(*Extracts from a Paper read by the Rev. P. T. Forsyth, D.D., on "A Larger Comprehension: the Remedy for the Decay of Theology," on May 7th, 1878, at a meeting of the Leicester Conference.*")

In view of recent developments and of the attitude of Dr. Forsyth towards the New Theology and Mr. Campbell, the readers of the SEED SOWER will be greatly interested in the paragraphs we quote from an address given by that gentleman thirty years ago, when he was associated with J. A. Picton, Mark Wilks, Benjamin Waugh, Charles Beard, Dr. Hunter, in advocating a larger liberality and comprehension than the Denominations then recognised. It is only fair to say that Dr. Forsyth began his paper by declaring himself a thorough-going Evangelical, a believer in the Incarnation, Atonement, Miracles, etc. But that did not prevent him then from joining with a number of so-called heretics in getting away from the idea "that agreement in theological opinion can no longer be held to be essential to religious communion." A nobler plea for liberty of thought, and the liberty of differing, and liberty of prophecying can hardly be found. But, alas! What a fall is there in the harsh assailant of Mr. Campbell from the sweet reasonable advocate of "free thought in theology" of the Leicester Conference.

"The passion for orthodoxy tends to destroy the passion for truth. We have passed the age of political intolerance. We have not yet outgrown the age of ecclesiastical intolerance. Political intolerance grew out of an exploded doctrine as to the authority of the State. Ecclesiastical intolerance, both in Episcopacy and in Dissent, grows out of an exploded idea as to the authority of the Church. That authority being denied, who is to prescribe the doctrines to be tolerated, and those to be prohibited? Yet some are selected from a difficult and unsystematic Scripture by a self-constituted interpreting authority, and religious respectability with exchange of visits made to depend on assent thereto. It is the spirit of the sect, —that is the offensive thing. It is the spirit of the sects, the absence of a really catholic basis, that is the source of the peculiar theological bitterness. And there always will be the spirit of the sects clinging to our loftiest and most potent truths, so long as they are used for shibboleths, and made the symbols of division and exclusion, rather than of comprehensive charity and universal intent. Let us proclaim our great truths: but let us exact only the spirit in which they live and from which they spring. The great age of the Church was when she gave all and took nothing; when she proclaimed a creed, but exacted none. Obedience, more than assent, is the Divine demand."

"It is sometimes of more moment how a truth is held than what the truth in itself is. The weakness of religion in the world, and the contempt for the Christian forms of it, are due more to the way Christians hold their faith than to anything in the faith itself. It would seem often as if the chief function of theology were to divide those who believe in it, and to alienate those who don't. It must always be so while the recognised bond has so much to do with the conclusions of a faculty so analytic as the intellect. Theology is the scientific or intellectual side of religion, and science will not afford a universal bond. All the littleness of life and the contemptuousness of proud and unchastened souls seem to fatten upon the discussion of truths which first dawned on mankind in sublime elation of spirit and solemn, receptive, humble calm."

"We have free trade. We profess to believe in free thought. But we have yet to secure the blessing of free thought for the loftie

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matters, the matters where it is most absolutely needful. We have yet to have free trade in theology. At present it is a protected industry. Artificial premiums are put upon certain forms of the article, penalties are attached to other than particular conclusions. I say penalties. What the good man prizes most is communion with God, and next to that is communion with other lovers of God. Rob him of these, and you punish him in a degree proportionate to his goodness. You cannot cut him off from God, but (and the whole force of my paper lies here) I can conceive nothing more in the nature of a penalty to the best and most Christ-like minds than to be exiled from communion in the bond of Christ because they have faithfully, prayerfully, and with stern self-discipline, used the faculties given by God with the liberty and impulse that is in Christ. All protected industries suffer for it. Protection injures the world outside, and it disorganises in the end the industry conserved."

"The Divine Spirit is continually destroying institutions, even when there is no thought or intention of the kind on the part of those who are giving it fuller voice. It is a poor faith in the Spirit of God that discredits its ability to re-build a ruined temple in its own three days. The present system of Church organisation is but partially successful. The most orthodox must distrust its perfection. A change must lie in the future. A great authority tells us the change will probably be in the direction here indicated. We do not succeed at present in keeping outside our Churches men who may be said almost to lack a soul, who abound in mean devices and bitter words, whose only commendation is their worldly success and the conventionality of their unverified creed. And yet, we reject men who in everything but the formulæ of faith are such as we confess the Church aims to produce; men who are moral and spiritual ganglia to the nation; men who invest intellectual honesty with a sanctity that Christ would have loved. There must be something wrong. We all feel there is something wrong—something that means serious remedy and change. Many say that the faith which is the life of the Church and the bond of Christ has changed its sense. The Church's centre of gravity, it is said, has been changed. It has been moved into the intellectual region. Faith has come to mean, not devotion of soul before God in the face of Christ, but certain conclusions upon hotly-contested intellectual points. It may be said, of course, that belief in the physical resurrection, *e.g.*, is not an intellectual belief. Now, I believe in that physical resurrection; but I believe it because the balance of evidence seems to me in its favour. Every past fact is a matter of evidence. And the moment the fact is called in question, the sifting of evidence becomes necessary. And that is a very severe intellectual process indeed, and a delicate one, and one which should be more carefully secluded from disturbing forces than any popular vote can ensure. It has yet to be seen if the voluntary system gives room to an honest thinker who is more than one generation ahead of his time."

"Where are we to stop?" it is asked. And it is answered, "That is not our business." God will stop us. We shall stop at Catholic truth, and never leave it. Those who mistrust a Divine foundation for human life may well despair of a final truth by entire freedom and free competition of probabilities. But if God and man be at the bottom one, as the Incarnate God is our pledge, we shall reach that unity of peace in the end by unbinding the Spirit of God, and leaving the matter, free from artificial restrictions, to the operation of those natural laws which, in such a sphere, are truly Divine. Spiritual affinities coagulate by a law of their own. The only belief worth having is natural belief untrammelled by artificial protection. At the root of all religious protection is a distrust of the real and deepest scope of the Incarnation, of the divine basis of mankind, of its ultimate bias to truth, and its power of recognising it when set simply and fearlessly forth. Nothing but truth in the end will win man's allegiance, and men will distrust as true all results which are guarded by the least embargo laid upon research. No wonder if men suspect our truth when we show such a distrust of it, as is involved in the licensing of some, and the prohibiting of others, of its forms."

The New Theology.

II.

Immanence and Incarnation.

Psalms cxxxix., 8-10. St. John iii., 29.

"He that hath the bride is the bridegroom," is a sentence recorded as falling from the lips of John the Baptist. It was the Forerunner's moment of inspiration. Like all really great sayings this also is of universal application. It carries a weight of meaning bigger than the speaker knew, and is a parable in half-a-dozen words. Many men know the bride by sight; they may have had occasional friendly conversation with her; they may have admired her grace and beauty and intelligence, but to one only does she belong, to one only does she give herself, namely, to the man who is deeply and passionately in love with her, and who lays his all at her feet. "He that hath the bride is the bridegroom." Here is a great idea, the Fatherhood of God. We call it Christian, we say it belongs to Christ as the fundamental thing of his gospel. But Christ was not the first of the human race to discover it. It had been known of old. Prophets and poets had given it voice. Yet it belongs to Christ since he was the first to see its full significance, to bring it to the front, to make it all in all, to fall passionately in love with it and give it the devotion of life and death. He that hath a truth is he who is in love with it, who makes everything of it, who lays down his life for its sake. "He that hath the bride is the bridegroom."

The New Theology associated with the name of Mr. Campbell, centres round the idea of the Immanence of God—God, not seated on a throne outside the universe, but God the soul of the universe—God, the everywhere-present—God, the informing thought, the inbreathing life, the indwelling spirit—incarnated in the great whole. In this view God is not a localizeable personality, remote from the world, and acting upon it only by means of occasional portent and prodigy; nor is the world a lifeless machine blindly groping after God, and only finding him when he sees fit to interfere with its ordinary working. On the contrary, God is the ever-present life of the world; it is through him and in him that all things exist, from moment to moment, and the natural sequence of events is a perpetual unveiling of his face.

Now it is perfectly true that this is no new idea. Here it is in the old book of Psalms; the whole teaching of Jesus is saturated by that conception; it flashes out from the writings of Paul; it was a leading doctrine with the early Greek Fathers, Clement, Origen and Athanasius. But the Christian Church, under the influence of Augustine, lost sight of it for nearly fifteen centuries, setting up instead an Absentee God—a God far removed from the world, the Creator separated from his creation by the whole breadth of infinitude—and out of that conception arose much of the body of doctrine known as Orthodox Christianity, yet never dreamed of by Christ and his Apostles. Here and there among the mystics a voice was heard proclaiming the immanence of God, that man lives in God and God in man in indissoluble union, that the universe throbs and thrills with the Divine; but the teaching fell on dull ears. Spinoza came, the father of modern criticism, and men called him an Atheist, although a more God-possessed man never lived, but his influence passed away. It has been reserved for our age to see the immense importance of this truth with all its implications, to rescue it from neglect, to bring it to the front, to make it all in all, to emphasise it as carrying with it vast changes in popular theology; and so in a very real sense it is new, and belongs to this age, because he that hath the bride is the bridegroom. The Bridegroom is not Mr. Cambpell, nor any individual or group of individuals; it is this new age to which we all belong.

The New Theology is not a Congregational affair, nor an Unitarian affair, nor a Broad Church affair, it is a world movement; east and west, north and south, wherever you turn there is a stirring among the dry bones, an upheaval of thought, a widening of the horizon. Our own Churches have their place and mission in this movement, but in itself it is much bigger than they, and it is only folly that claims it for Unitarianism, or Congregationalism, or any sect or party whatever. The fly on the engine wheel flattered

himself that he was the cause of its turning, whereas the wheel was turning him. Really some of our Unitarian friends remind me of that fly. Let us gladly recognise that we are taking a part, a humble part, but a very real part, in a world-wide movement. Nor let us be dismayed when we are told by Presidents of Theological Colleges that we are poor unlearned folk who have no business to hold opinions on such high matters at all, but ought to leave them to the experts.. One of the most amusing and by far the most contemptible opponents of Mr. Campbell is a religious newspaper, which for several years retained Mr. Campbell's services, at a considerable fee, to conduct a correspondence column in which he might meet and answer questions of theological difficulty placed before him. He was widely read as the capable theological expert of the *British Weekly*. It is not surprising that the *British Weekly* should dispense with Mr. Campbell's column, but it is surprising that it should sneer at Mr. Campbell because he did not have a regular theological training, and therefore his deliverances can have no weight! But really and truly if scholarship is to tell the New Theology need not take a back seat. A theology which has Harnack for an exponent in Germany, Sabatier in France, Martineau, Carpenter and Picton in England, cannot be pooh-poohed as wanting in learned experts. College Presidents must come off their pedestals and discuss these problems with men every bit as intelligent as themselves. As my friend Rhondda Williams puts it, "no *ex-cathedra* utterances will do —The day is past for authoritative deliverances. Moreover, before any professional theologian allows himself to sneer at popular attempts at theology, let him remember that the great mass of the people have already turned their backs on the theology of the schools and its professors, and are looking elsewhere for help when they look at all. Will these College Principals, who assure us that evangelical theology holds the field in their colleges, take note of these facts:—That in almost every college there are professors who do not teach that theology; that in all the colleges there are students dissatisfied with it, and inquiring elsewhere for guidance in their studies, that a great proportion of the educated public in this country never enter the Churches, and that the same may be said of the mass of working men?"

The notable thing about Mr. Campbell's utterances is not that he should have fixed public attention on the idea of the Immanence of God, but that he should have fully accepted all its implications, its entire overthrow of orthodox theology, and its demand for re-adjustment all round. The way in which this idea is seen to alter our view of the universe, to abolish the old distinctions between natural and supernatural, to change the old complexion of Incarnation and atonement and human nature—it is this which is filling with alarm our College Presidents. And it is this which is new.

It is not new to us—but it is new to our age. That God is present in nature, that God is not far away in a distant realm but is here, incarnate in flower and bird and stream, that God is not one Being above all others, but that God is the only Being, that He himself is the great whole, and that all are contained in him,—this is the revolutionary idea of modern Christianity. Wordsworth gave it noble expression in those famous, often-quoted lines, where he describes his consciousness of the Universal Presence of the Divine:—

A presence that disturbs me with the joy
Of elevated thoughts; a sense sublime
Of something far more deeply interfused,
Whose dwelling is the light of setting suns,
And the round ocean, and the living air,
And the blue sky, and in the mind of man:
A motion and a spirit that impels
All thinking things, all objects of thought,
And rolls through all things.

This is the idea of God you will find in Goethe, Emerson, Tennyson and Browning. But perhaps it has never been so graphically expressed as in a hymn by an American writer:—

God of the granite and the rose,
Soul of the sparrow and the bee,
The mighty tide of being flows,
Through countless channels, Lord, from thee.

It leaps to life in grass and flowers,
Through every grade of being runs,
While from creation's radiant towers,
Thy glory flames in stars and suns.

So, like the birds and streams and flowers,
The life within us is divine,
Nor time, nor space, nor earthly powers,
Man's God-like spirit can confine.

"The life within us is divine." This is another of the points of the New Theology which has aroused the anger of the critics. The New Theology proclaims as a necessary implication of the Immanence of God the divinity of man. If God is the great whole of things—"the Divine Totality of Being"—then all things are divine, and we sing with Hartley Coleridge:—

So then believe that every bird that sings,
And every flower that stars the fresh grave sod,
And every thought that happy summer brings
To the pure spirit is a word of God.

Not that all are equally words of God—not that all men as yet are equally divine—but that something of God is within every soul that lives—and that by that something he thinks and lives and hopes and fears. This is a divine universe. The beneficent and living God must be wholly in it or else we are but shadow men and the children of shadows, and Omar Khayyam is right.

The conception of Divine Immanence has many far-reaching consequences, but none so important as that which bears on the doctrine of the Incarnation. There is a truth of Incarnation in which I most devoutly believe; it has its roots in the fact that this universe is not outside God, but that God is its soul, that God is All in all, the completed whole. The world itself, animate and inanimate, is an unveiling of God, and an incarnation of the Divine. The Bible looks on creation as a real logos, or word of God. "The heavens declare the glory of God." "Day unto day uttereth speech." "Whither shall I flee from thy presence." "The invisible things of God since the creation are perceived through the things that are made." Indeed, to a large part of mankind, nearly all that they conceive of God has come along that line. But God is yet more wonderfully incarnate in man. The infinite One lives and moves and has something of his being in us. There is in the lowest specimen of humanity a spark of the Divine. Something of God is present there. In that thought:—

Each face—
Pale faces marked with care,
Dark, toil-worn brows—grows fair—
King's children are these all, though want and sin
Have marred their beauty, glorious within;
We may not pass them but with reverent eye.

Jesus is the unique instance of the incarnation of the divine in the human. He is one in kind with God and with us, one absolutely in kind although worlds different in degree. I am here reminded of that great admission by Dr. Dale. He said "Christ's incarnation was not an isolated and abnormal wonder. It was God's witness to the true and ideal relation of all men to God." Dr. Dale was all-unwittingly voicing the New Theology! Of course, I know that he did not mean to dissent from the current view of the miraculous birth of Christ. What he meant, I take it, was this:—that God was not dumb, wordless, unexpressed, unrevealed, until the historic hour when in Christ the word became flesh and dwelt among us. That event he would have said is by pre-eminence "THE Incarnation." But, and here Dr. Dale and Mr. Campbell and we in this place are all in agreement (much as Dr. Dale would have been astonished at his company!) when he said—"The Incarnation is no detached event, it is the issue of an eternal process of utterance—'the Word, whose goings forth have been from old—from everlasting.'"

Let each man think himself an act of God.
His mind a thought, his life a breath of God.

No! the Incarnation and divinity of Christ is not an isolated and abnormal wonder, it is in line with humanity's powers and dignity, it is the supreme instance of God and man in union. But it does not stand alone. Orthodox Theology narrows, localizes, and so devitalizes the great spiritual idea of incarna-

tion by limiting it to one of our race. There is a truth in the Nicené Creed, bigger, grander, truer, than the framers of it knew, bigger, grander, truer, than bishops and priests are to-day aware, or will admit. It is the absolute union of the son with the Father. They are of the same substance—and that is the same spiritual nature. But this is a truth which is true of the whole human race to which Christ belonged. The Divine Son is the whole human family, and it is for ever in inseparable union with God. The Church has preached a doctrine of union with God for one only; a truer view of incarnation declares that Christ is the first-born among *many* brethren, a supreme illustration of an universal truth. One nature belongs to God and Christ and man. All who think and love are of the same lineage. They differ infinitely in degree, but in kind, in nature they are one. How else could we be "imitators of God as dear children."

The New Theology teaches that as God entered into Jesus, and wove his being through the being of that beloved son, revealing by him his own character, so in measure he incarnates himself in us. The great truth of Incarnation is not particular to Jesus, but universal to the race. God has been always and is now living in us all, speaking through us, revealing by our means phases of his manifold being, always "the word taking flesh" (to use the oriental phrase) in more or less degree revealing himself, now in the development of intellectual truth, now in the development of beauty, now in spiritual power, so that all human goodness is the revelation through incarnation of the essential spirit of purity and love, until, in this incarnation in various forms and phases of thought, feeling, joy, aspiration, and power throughout the whole of the human race, we see the face of God and know that he and we are in immortal union.

The New Theology proclaims a broader, grander, Incarnation than that of other days, since it is not of one only but of the whole human household. For the Word—that is the Thought, Wisdom, Reason, Spirit of God, takes flesh with every new-born child. He too is a Son of God as well as a son of man (all democracy lies in that truth); he is indissolubly united to God, and can never be separated from him without ceasing to be.

From the beginning of the world the Immanent God has incarnated himself in man, and man has been by that in-dwelling divine. And at every moment of the present time God is incarnating himself in man, so that all truth of every kind, all noble action of every kind, all the vast work of love, imagination, intellect, all that we know, all that we revere, all that we adore, is the revelation of God, through incarnation, in every human soul. And however weak individual efforts may be to set that forth,

God makes himself an awful rose of dawn,
And light is spreading, dispersing the party coloured mists of an imperfect theology, and revealing the truth that God is all in all, that he is not merely outward to us but within, the breath of our breath, the light of our seeing, the warmth of our love, and that man at his best is what he is by reason of the God within.

JOSEPH WOOD.

The Song of Labour.

I SING the song of the workman,
The joy of the man whose hand
Leaps to fulfil with practised skill
The keen, sure brain's demand,
Who knows the thrill of creation,
Who stands with the Lord as one—
Sees what was wrought from hidden thought,
And can say of his work, "Well done!"

Some must lie soft and feed daintily,
Or the soul in them makes moan,
But little he heeds who finds his needs
In the makers joy alone;
Sorrow and pain may come to him,—
They surely come to all,—
But ever he feels a strength that steels
His heart to the shafts that fall.

He gladly greets the coming years,
They bring him added skill;
He feels no ruth for the loss of youth,
His goal is nearer still:
And only this he asks of fate,
That he may keep his dower
Of strength and will and labour's skill
Unto his life's last hour.

NINETTE M. LOWATER.

Sir Oliver Lodge's Catechism.

The Substance of Faith.

Sir Oliver Lodge's Catechism, first published in the July number of the "Hibbert Journal," 1906, and recently elucidated clause by clause in his little book, entitled, "The Substance of Faith," is a welcome illustration of the constructive tendencies of modern thought working outside all ecclesiastical pales. It is at the same time an illustration of something more. Within ecclesiastical pales thought has everywhere been rapidly moving. Men have found themselves outgrowing the old orthodoxy, with its stereotyped creeds and artificial theories of sin and salvation, with alarming rapidity. A deepening religious spirit, as well as broadening thought, has found itself in rebellion. And thus, inside the Churches, many destructive and many new constructive tendencies are also at work. Now the point of interest is that both within and without the Churches the new spiritual movement is in the same direction. The two lines of constructive thought converge on the same theological goals. On the wreckage of the old materialism and agnosticism, Science on the one hand, is rebuilding, by the use of much modern material, the doctrine of the Divine Immanence. On the other hand, within the Churches the "New Theology" has arisen, itself an indication of a movement far more widely spread, the central thought of which is this same conception of the Immanence of God in nature and the Soul of man. These facts give a book like Sir Oliver Lodge's "Substance of Faith," its real significance. It indicates, in a necessarily provisional but most valuable way, the lines along which those sections of the thinking world that have become dissatisfied with the old ecclesiastical presentation of Christianity, and with the merely negative presentations of Science, are seeking and finding agreement. If we interpret Sir Oliver Lodge rightly, an end even greater than this was in his mind in drawing up the clauses of his catechism, Presumably a statement of fundamental truths and principles, which could be accepted, not by certain sections only, but by *all*, had appeared to him possible. So one infers from the statement in the preface that the Catechism is intended to deny nothing which can reasonably be held by any specific Denomination, and seeks to affirm nothing but what is consistent with universal Christian experience. The teaching of "The substance of Faith" has not, however, found universal acceptance. The Bishop of Birmingham has recently, in his lectures in the Cathedral Church, taken this book as an illustration of the New Theology, which he described as "a higher kind of Unitarianism," and which stands, in his opinion, in sharp contrast with the essentials of Christianity, in some respects at least.

If it fails as a universally acceptable statement of the first principles of Faith, its true value is however not thereby lessened. It is a statement largely acceptable to that portion of the thinking world that is exercising a growing power in forming and controlling the general outlook.

In examining the teaching of this book, one needs constantly to bear in mind its small dimensions. There is not, and cannot be, within its compass an exhaustive treatment of any given subject. Many points are raised on which one would like to have a fuller presentation of the author's views. As an example, there is the knotty point with which every immanence doctrine has somehow to deal—the autonomy of the human will. Speaking of the term "God," Sir Oliver Lodge says, "Although vastly more must be attributed to the Reality devoted by the term 'God' than we can even begin to conceive of; yet such a term, if it is to have any meaning at all, must at least include everything we have so far been able to discover as existent in the Universe." And again, "We are a part of the Universe, and the Universe is a part of God." The Bishop of Birmingham construed this as teaching the *identity* of God and man. A thorough-going monism will not shrink from this though it lands us in a dilemma, out of which no man has yet been able to find a way in dealing with the problem of evil. If man is "a part of God," then every motion of the human will must be equally a motion of the divine will, and evil in the sense of a thwarting of the divine will

has become non-existent. But the above statements must be read in the light of the rest of the teaching of the book, where frequently, the independence of the human will is enforced. Thus the answer to question 8: "What is sin?" the answer runs: "Sin is the deliberate and wilful act of a free agent, who sees the better and chooses the worse, and thereby acts injuriously to himself and others." Men are again spoken of as "free beings," and Tennyson's lines are quoted with approval:—

"Our wills are ours, we know not how,
Our wills are ours to make them thine."

Sir Oliver Lodge, like Dr. Martineau, does not allow his doctrine of immanence to resolve itself into a doctrine of identity. God is not "the totality of existence," and man is not simply a part of God, because man's being can stand in oppositon to, and thwart the movement of God's being.

This point has importance in connection with the view of Christ's being. It is manifest that no doctrine of the Godhead of Christ can ever logically issue from a doctrine of the immanence of God in man. But before dealing with this further it will be well to sum up the general point of view taken in "The Substance of Faith." It is as follows:—

"Man is a descendant of ancestors who rose by gradual processes from lower forms of animal life. At a certain stage of development he became conscious of a difference between right and wrong, acquired the power of free choice, and so became a morally responsible being. On one side he is still a member of the animal kingdom; on another he is an associate in a loftier type of existence, and linked with the Divine. There is a Power in the Universe good and loving, able to help and guide him without detriment to his incipient freedom. This Power was specially manifested to man in the Life of Jesus Christ. Man can communicate with this Power in prayer, and make himself more and more its instrument and vehicle, thus helping the world to fuller harmony with the Divine Will, and gaining for himself a growing perfection of Life that may go on for ever. This Power is an Intelligence immanent in all nature, a spirit of righteousness drawing human spirits into tune with itself, a Heavenly Father, loving, yearning, suffering in the storm and conflict of human life, and subject to its conditions as the incarnate Spirit of humanity.

No part of the book is more interesting than that which expounds a conception of Christianity held by the author to be in harmony with this general scheme. The position taken is not altogether clear to the average reader, and no attempt is made to distinguish it from what may be presumed to be contrasted views. But one must not expect too much from a small book. The ideas of the author circle round a central thought, viz., that "Christianity is a planetary and human religion: being the revelation of those aspects of Godhead which are most intelligible and helpful to us in our present stage of development. But it is more than a revelation, it is a manifestation of some of the attributes of Godhead in the form of humanity." This "manifestation" is to be found in Christ, because he was "highest man." For "it is through man, and the highest man, that the revelation of what is meant by Godhead must necessarily come." In spite of differences which seem beyond our power to reconcile, the mass of Christians, the author holds, will agree that the Life of Jesus was "a revelation of the high water-mark of manhood, and a manifestation of the human attributes of God." But, as Bishop Gore has shown, this is precisely the presentation of Christ that dogmatic Christianity does not and cannot accept, and never has accepted. It is not to be reconciled with the view that Jesus of Nazareth was the second person of the Trinity, born of a virgin, existing before birth as a distinct personality, incarnated at a given date in human history, with characteristics of being, and a function on earth such as belong to no other human being, and by no possibility can belong. That is the creed view, and a true champion of the creeds such as Bishop Gore consequently cannot accept a view of Jesus which discovers in him simply the flower of the race, and because of that, the supreme manifesto of the human attributes of deity. Here is the line along which the controversy with the Unitarian is waged. It is quite clear. Is there any doubt as to which side of the line the "Substance of Faith" belongs? This distinction must be

grasped if one is not to be led astray by certain phrases in the book which admit of a double interpretation—one in harmony with the general teaching of the author, another, quite distinct, in harmony with dogmatic Christianity. For instance, "The most essential element in Christianity is its conception of a human God." To the orthodox Christian that would mean one thing, to the upholder of the modern doctrine of immanence quite another. To the latter it admits of being resolved, as it is resolved by Sir Oliver Lodge into the statement that "The Humanity of God, the Divinity of man, is the essence of the Christian revelation." To the former it means but one thing, that the being known as "Jesus of Nazareth" is not to be included in our human category in the way that all others are, but was the incarnation of the second person of the Trinity, and moved among men consciously possessed of the unique powers of God. The one finds in the recognition that "God is revealed as the incarnate Spirit of humanity," the crowning achievement of Christianity. The other finds it in the recognition of an absolute and final authority in the word of Jesus, who has established his claim to be not as other men, but God himself, with all the divine prerogatives.

We heartily welcome this contribution of one of the most eminent minds of our day to the discussion of fundamental problems, which is so rapidly extending. A kindly and conciliatory spirit pervades the whole book, and we believe that this exhibition of a mind moving freely and sympathetically over controversial ground in the endeavour to find some spot where controversy may be for a while forgotten in agreement, is and will continue to be an immense influence for good in the world, though that quest may not be as successful as some of us could wish.

J. Worsley Austin.

Duty, be it in a small matter or a great, is duty still, the command of heaven, the eldest voice of God. And it is only they who are faithful in a few things, who will be faithful over many things. — *Charles Kingsley.*

A Free Catholic Church.

By J. M. Lloyd Thomas.

(*London, Williams and Norgate, 1/6 net.*)

This little book is a brave but unpretentious word of prophecy, concerning the Church of the future. Its main burden is that belief in dogma must and will be surrendered as a test of membership. "Religion," he well says, "is not a mere belief about things, but the spirit in which we accept and face them." "It is first of all not even a doctrine, but a climate and temper of the whole spirit which permanently sustains high moral and intellectual efforts, as well as deep, satisfying emotions." If this be true, it is obvious that as a test for Church membership or communion, nothing could be more ridiculous and absurd than assent to the Athanasian Creed, or to the Westminster Confession, or even to the historicity of the virgin birth, the incarnation, the atonement, or the resurrection. Perhaps some of Mr. Thomas's readers may ask, is there any possible test at all of Church membership and communion? Yes, there is; but it is not imposed by authority, and it can be applied only by the member or communicant himself. "The ultimate basis of every enduring society," says Mr. Thomas, "is brotherhood and fellowship. If that communion is greatly conceived, deeply felt, spiritually realised, it becomes at once a *religious* communion, of which the central meaning and final fact is God."

Ah! says the dogmatist, I thought we should get it at last. Here surely is the most tremendous dogma of all—God. The true answer to this confident retort cannot possibly be given as a parenthesis in this brief notice of a book. But perhaps I may illustrate its irrelevance to Mr. Thomas's prophecy. For as it happens just now, a good deal is being said about "divine immanence." But this is not "new theology." It represents the interpretation put upon their consciousness by mystics in all ages; and there have been many who did not know they were mystics, and have had the consciousness without putting any interpretation upon it at all. Now, in all this, where was the

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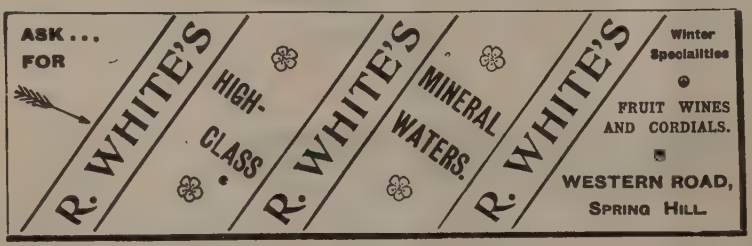

"dogma?" Surely it is of the essence of a dogma to be articulate. But this sense of the "divine immanence" has not been articulate at all. For it did not consist in "a belief about things," but rather in "the spirit with which men accepted and faced them." One man who has that sense may think with Spinoza, and another with John Wesley, and a third may hardly think at all. But to all of them a dogma about God is in their most religious moments a mere superfluity. Mr. Thomas therefore may be quite right in saying that the "central meaning and final fact of any real fellowship is God," and yet such a fellowship may include people who would absolutely decline to accept the first article of the Apostle's Creed.

Mr. Thomas is very confident that his "Free Catholic Church is a certainty of the future. Thus he hands on to a new generation the faith professed by certain elders of his, who some twenty-eight years ago propounded their views in what was then known as the "Leicester Conference." It received that name because it was held in that home of liberal ideas; and it was simply a sectional and unauthorised meeting of certain members of the Congregational Union then holding its autumnal assembly in the town. The late Mark Wilks, of Holloway Chapel was a leading spirit, and the Rev. Benjamin Waugh, the honoured founder and Director of the Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children, was an eager and impassioned speaker. The principle in which the majority of the Conference emphatically concurred was that agreement in theological opinion is not necessary to united worship or spiritual communion. As a practical illustration a service was afterwards held, of probably unprecedented character, in an Independent Chapel in London. It was presided over by the late Rev. John Rodgers, vicar of St. Thomas', Charterhouse. The late Rev. Charles Beard, the brilliant Unitarian, delivered the only address, while scripture was read and prayers were offered by, amongst others, a Minister of the "Seventh Day Baptists," a Primitive Methodist, and one or two others of still different sects. It was a bright, hearty, earnest service, and one of the distinguished rationalists of the day remarked to me at the conclusion that it reminded him of the religious fervour of his early days. Unfortunately, the movement died out, not so much, I think, because of the wrath of the Congregational Union, but rather because the time was hardly ripe. Mr. Lloyd Thomas is more fortunate in his age, and it is quite possible he may live to see the realisation of his ideal.

My sympathy with him is so deep that I am loth to utter even a word of friendly criticism. Yet I will venture it. On page 85 he insists strenuously on "the obligations of a scrupulous veracity in the use of hymn chant and anthem." I fully recognise that the context ought sufficiently to guard readers against a prosaic precisianism. Still, I can imagine a tender conscience being debarred by such a warning from joining the hymn "O Jesus, king most wonderful." And I do not think that desirable. I, who believe in no creed, I, who cannot in the literal and gramatical sense, affirm "God, the Father Almighty, Maker of Heaven and Earth," yet feel the words of that hymn stir the deepest sources of emotion. I could justify this minutely, did not space forbid. Very likely Mr. Lloyd Thomas would say that this comes within his rule. May be. But I deprecate the faintest suggestion that we must agree with the doctrines of a hymn before we can enjoy it, or sincerely sing it. This would make the Hebrew Psalms impossible. On the other hand, I must cordially endorse the next statement that: "The attempt to evade the damnatory meaning of the Athanasian Creed, by interpreting it as a devotional chant is as grotesque and violent a proceeding as would be the attempt to turn the Aliens' Act into a cycle of patriotic sonnets."

Again, Mr. Lloyd Thomas, while tentatively suggesting the propriety of using the crucifix as a symbol in free Catholic worship, says (page 91), that "it, like the cross, belongs to Christendom." Yes, but the cross, as a symbol, belongs to more than Christendom. For there can be little doubt that the readiness with which so repulsive an emblem as the cross, was adopted by heathen converts, was largely owing to its mergence in the sun-emblem or "swastika," of which the Greek cross is the simplest form. Now the cross, as

a symbol of suffering, sacrifice, death, will not serve as the dominant symbol of the future Catholic Church. The reason why it has served hitherto is that the devout have dwelt perhaps naturally on martyrdom. But surely the time has come when those positive elements of religion, summed up in the words "lay hold on eternal life," should attract more devotion. The Church of the past has made a great deal too much of suffering and sacrifice. We want now to appreciate more the joy of triumphant being, and if there is any truth in this view of religious evolution, the symbol of the cross will have to be taken as reminding us of "the sun of righteousness that rises with healing in his wings," rather than of the dread darkness of Calvary.

J. Allanson Picton.

Notes and Jottings.

"*What will Mr. Campbell say?*" was a question asked in "Notes and Jottings" for March with reference to his promised Essex Hall Lecture. The answer given was that his pronouncement would probably be "a perfectly moderate and un-sensational one." It is to be more moderate than this wild prophecy anticipated. In fact it is going to be absolutely neutral with the blank neutrality of utter silence. At the last moment, Mr. Campbell, yielding to some mysterious impulse, broke his pledge and cancelled the engagement. What does it mean? Well, let him solve his own problems in his own way, and let us refrain from complaining.

Mr Campbell's new book is out, and I have read it through—although hastily—from cover to cover. With one or two exceptions the reviews in the press have been hostile. The *Manchester Guardian*, over the familiar initials "W. H. D.," was friendly but not enthusiastic. The same might be said of the *Scotsman*, and of Sir Oliver Lodge's interesting article in the *Daily News*. But on the whole the notices have not been favourable. This was what one might have expected. The genuine opinion of the public is however yet to be discovered. From local booksellers I hear the volume is going—I repeat their words—"like hot cakes." Every true Unitarian will rejoice that this is so. It is a book full of suggestion and of plain speaking, accompanied by some mystifying statements. But it will stimulate thought, create a new interest in religion and theology, and give an enormous impulse to the cause of literal Christianity.

I offer to Mr. Campbell my sincere congratulations on the appearance of his work. Here is a book which, be its merits what they may, is at any rate a feat of authorship. A volume of nearly 300 pages, dealing with the deepest deliverances of the human consciousness, put together during a brief holiday, printed and published at a speed which might make even Americans livid with envy, is no small literary achievement. An extraordinary sale is assured. I hope Mr. Campbell will set about revising it and remove the marks of haste and hurry, and turn it into—what it does not now profess to be—literature.

A striking little book which may be had for sixpence is Dr. Schmiedel's "Jesus in Modern Criticism," recently published by Adam and Charles Black. The general reader cannot be expected to be familiar with the author's articles in the *Encyclopædia Biblica* which caused much excitement on their appearance and aroused the anger of Principal Fairbairn. Here in more popular form appear once more the now famous "foundation-pillars of a really scientific life of Jesus." Even students well acquainted with the *Encyclopædia Biblica* article on the Gospels will find in this little book some fresh and stimulating ideas, as well as an extremely interesting personal confession of faith.

Dr. Schmiedel disposes of the theory of Mr. J. M. Robertson in *Pagan Christs* that Jesus never lived, and then concludes by asking what bearing the results of his lecture have upon our personal religion. "For my own part," he says, "I would not even assert that he was unique: for the word either has no meaning, inasmuch as every man is unique, or it may be understood in such a way that it implies too much." He goes on to say that "my inmost religious convictions would suffer no harm, even if I now felt obliged to conclude that Jesus never lived." But having made this declaration he concludes by saying that Jesus had something to offer which appeals to every human heart

in the universe, and is to that extent *eternally true*. Above all, he possessed a *religious nature* of such strength and purity as have never, to our knowledge, been combined in any other person, and so Dr. Schmiedel, the critical historian, "can echo the words which I learned from one of my most conservative teachers: 'Christianity is the truth of humanity.'"

It is to be feared that even the Church-going laity are not as intellectually alive as they used to be. It is a rare thing to come across a layman who is really wide-awake to what is going on in the religious world. The ordinary religious public are generally fast asleep, and although they have now been poked up to sudden consciousness by the New Theology sensation, they will probably retire for another snooze after devout prayers not to be disturbed again.

I do not know what may be the experience of other ministers, but the laymen most alive to religious interests whom I meet are typical Nineteenth Century sceptics. They know something about the Mills, Darwin, Herbert Spencer, Tyndall, and Huxley—and there they have stuck. The amusing and at the same time pathetic thing is to see them nursing the proud consciousness that they are born out of due time, that they and their ideas are "before their age," when as a matter of fact they are so sadly belated that the names of their masters and heroes come to modern minds with a faint and far-off suggestion of antiquity.

It is difficult to know how to deal with these men. On the one hand we have the intellectual indolence of the indifferentists, on the other hand the intellectual superiority of the obsolete. There seems nothing for it but to concentrate on the younger generation—to teach them that great thinkers have lived before the Mills and great agnostics after Huxley. In this way we may succeed in bringing up a people in living contact with the great indivisible mind of Humanity, and so in contact with the Holy Spirit that dwells therein. When we succeed in this, Christianity will have entered on a new era, and Religion will be recognised again as 'the music of the Infinite echoed from the hearts of men."

J. M. Lloyd Thomas.

News from the Field.

We have, as usual, various changes to report in our ministerial ranks. *Rev. W. Whittaker, B.A.*, has been welcomed in his new pastorate of *Hull*; *Rev. W. J. Pond*, late of *Long Sutton*, where a generous presentation has been made to him, has commenced his new work at *Whitchurch*; an appreciative testimonial has been given to the *Rev. T. P. Spedding*, on his leaving *Rochdale*, to undertake the charge of the *Van Missions*, under the direction of the *British and Foreign Unitarian Association*; the *Rev. Dr. Griffiths* has been appointed minister of *Oldham Road* Congregation, *Manchester*; and our valued friends, *Rev. Geo. Knight* and *Rev. H. S. Solly, M.A.*, have resigned, after long and valued services, their pulpits at *Dob Lane, Manchester*, and *Bridport*. Other changes are being made, the details of which have not yet reached us. But all these, and such as these, are incidental to the activities and general life of our Churches.

We hear, with regret, of the protracted illness of the *Rev. H. Gow, B.A.*, and trust he will soon be ready to take up his important work again; and also of the illness of *Rev. S. H. Street, B.A.*, who, for a time at least, is laid aside from his work at *Bell Street Mission, London*. But we rejoice that the *Rev. Joseph Wood* is so far restored to health that he is once again at his vigorous and important post of work and leadership. Our sympathies are with all our co-workers who suffer, and our kindest hopes are with them.

We are pleased to note activities in many parts of our field. The good folk of *Chesham, Bury*, under the inspiration of their energetic and capable minister, the *Rev. J. M. Bass, M.A.*, have had a splendid success with their Bazaar, at which they raised the sum of £2,415 10s. 5½d., an amount which clears away all their financial difficulties, and enables them to go on their progressive way rejoicing; the *Hurst Street, Birmingham*, has given another wonderful record of a year's work, and its minister, the *Rev. W. J. Clarke*, in his fine report, tells a splendid story of great works "attempted," and "*done*," while his optimism, amid the sorrows and sins amid which he labours, gives encouragement to all who can read, mark, and inwardly digest his cheering message; the *Knutsford* people have been enlarging their premises, so that they may do more work, and the *Rev. A. Payne* is to be congratulated thereon; the *London and S.E. Counties Association* have had a good meeting at *Mansford Street, London*, and also the *London Sunday School Association*, at *Essex Hall*.

In addition to these the *East Cheshire Union* has had an encouraging time at *Styal;* and the *Midland Christian Union* has had its Annual Meeting in *Birmingham* with marked success and spirit. Its record of work done, of the settlement of fresh workers at *Wolverhampton, Walsall*, and *Whitchurch*; of the devoted work

of its lay preachers; its plans for new and larger service; and the general hopefulness in the tone and temper of its meetings, combined to leave the impression that this *Union* is growing more vital year by year, and giving promise of greater usefulness than it has ever achieved before.

Mr. John Harrison is to be congratulated and thanked for calling together at *Essex Hall* so many of the best workers in *London* at his "At Home." He has set a good example which we hope will be followed in various centres by our well-to-do and earnest laymen.

We note, with satisfaction, a movement going on in Ireland among our brethren there, to broaden their theological basis, and to extend their appreciation of what is contained in the word "free." They are trying to unite in the establishment of a "Free Presbyterian Church"—it is a step towards an absolutely Free Church, which will be as comprehensive as the Love of God.

The *Ministers' Sustentation Fund* appears to be doing a good and useful work. If its resources were augmented it would prove an even greater blessing to our poorly paid and hard worked ministry.

A very interesting function was held a few days ago at *Somerville*, the new and spacious home of the *H.M. College*. The occasion was the presentation of a fine oil portrait by *Mr. James Beard*, of his distinguished father, the late *Dr. J. R. Beard*, the founder of the College. The gift itself, which is to have a place on the walls of the College, is a noble one, and the expression of a fine filial spirit is greatly appreciated, and the testimonies it called forth from the *President, Mr. Grosvenor Talbot, Colonel Pilcher, the Chairman of the Committee, Principal Gordon*, and the *Rev. J. C. Street*, one of its *earliest students*, made a profound impression upon the large and distinguished audience gathered within its spacious rooms. A wish was expressed that the portraits of *Mr. Gaskell, Mr. Mackie*, and *Mr. Harry Rawson*, with other great workers and benefactors of the College, should soon have a place side by side with the founder, and the wish seems likely to be speedily realised.

We are glad to note that the *Rev. E. W. Lummis, M.A.*, continues to write cheerfully from "The Crows' Nest," and to give the impression that the Swiss air is bringing back fresh tone and health to his body and keeping his spirit alive and alert to all progressive thought throughout the world. We hope soon to see him among us once more.

Great interest has been taken throughout the country, and indeed, throughout the English-speaking world in the centenary of the *Poet Longfellow*. It is little wonder this should be so, for no one in the nineteenth century took so large a hold of the life of the young, or so sweetened the work and experience of many as he, and his influence seems to be growing as the years go by. Preachers and press alike have been testifying to the uplifting and healthy influence exercised by this Poet of our Larger Faith and Higher Life. He is one of our most precious possessions.

Our gallery of noble men and women who lived, worked, and died among us grows larger, and we can only gaze upon their faces as they pass from us, and thank God "that such as these have lived and died." Among our dear and distinguished ones we record the names of *Alderman Thomas Holt, J.P.*, of *Bury; Alderman Jas. Bibby, J.P.*, of *Burnley; S. Boucher*, of *Moneyrea; H. M. Acton*, of *Hale; John Taylor*, of *Accrington; Henry Blessley*, of *Portsmouth; Councillor Growcott*, of *Oldbury; J. H. Slater*, of *Newcastle-on-Tyne;* and that wonderful worker for *Peace, Goodwill*, and *Brotherhood, Hodgson Pratt*, of *London*. Associated with them we reverently mention the names of *Mrs. S. A. Knight*, of *Lynn*, and *Mrs. R. Rathbone*, of *Liverpool*. Peace and joy be with them all!

SCRUTATOR.

Mar. 15th, 1907.

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